

Rainbow Land Mine

Name, Location, and Type of Mine: Subsided adit at the Rainbow Land Mine in Placer County east of Foresthill, CA.

Project Cost: \$5,400

Remediation/Cleanup Funding Source: United States Forest Service - Tahoe National Forest (USFS), Department of Conservation (DOC)

Project Partners: USFS and DOC



Collapsed mine opening next to Last Chance Trail. Photo: Sam Hayashi, DOC (2006).

Mine History/Project Background

The Rainbow Land Mine is located on the Western States trail system in Placer County near the bottom of El Dorado Canyon, between Michigan Bluff and the abandoned mining town of Deadwood, east of Foresthill, California.

When first discovered by hikers on the Last Chance Trail, USFS staff and Western States Trail Foundation volunteers posted warnings about the collapse of portions of the trail to warn users of the potential danger.

Challenges

At the time of the collapse, there were two upcoming trail races, including the Western States Endurance Run and the Tevis Cup Endurance Horse Ride, as well as frequent use by horse riders, trail runners and hikers, which posed a challenge to keeping the trail open, and safe, until the opening could be closed.



Filling opening with PUF. Photo: Jon Mistchenko, DOC (2006).



Opening filled, concealed, and trail secured. Photo: Sam Hayashi, DOC (2006).

Remediation/Cleanup Approach

Tahoe National Forest abandoned mine specialist Rick Weaver worked with the AMLP to conduct a field review as quickly as possible. It was decided to fill the collapsed horizontal workings with Polyurethane Foam (PUF) and soil. The Department of Conservation provided materials and personnel to fill the opening. In one day, workers poured 17 cubic yards—the equivalent of a 6-foot-by-10-foot room—of PUF, provided by DOC, into the mine opening. The work was completed in June 2006, two days before the start of the Western States Endurance Run and about six weeks before the start of the 52nd Tevis Cup Endurance Horse Ride. At the end of the day, there was little evidence the hole ever existed.